

METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR AUTOMATICALLY DISSEMINATING INFORMATION OVER A NETWORK

Abstract of the Disclosure

An information distribution program (36) is provided for automatically
5 distributing information over a network (24) connecting a plurality of
computers (15). Each computer (15) is installed with the information distribution
program (36), which comprises a family construction module (44), a publication
module (40), a subscription module (42), and an information tree (46). The
information tree (46) stores the most recent information available to the
10 computer (15). The family construction module (44) organizes the various
computers (15) connected to the network (24) into immediate and extended families
of related computers (15). The publication module (40) automatically distributes,
"publishes" or "pushes" the information to the immediate and extended family
members of a computer (15) which have shown an interest in the information. The
15 subscription module (42) provides a computer (15) with the ability to show interest in
or "subscribe" to information located on the computers (15) connected to the
network (24).